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beside Booth and Irving, and take his measure accurately. His conception of the character is clear and simple. He sees no mysteries in it, and accepts Shakespeare's words as they are written. I should think that his *Hamlet* would resemble that of E. L. Davenport. If so, it will be very good.

But it is in modern French plays, translated into German, that Herr Sonnenthal will most delight his New York audiences. Before this prediction is printed he will have left us; but his return, next year, is certain.

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BUT it must not be supposed that this brilliant season has been distinguished for tragedy alone, although the enjoyments of Irving and Sonnenthal were preceded by those of Edwin Booth—who never acted better—and Lawrence Barrett—who never acted so well. On the contrary, there have been plenty of high-class comedy and burlesque performances and less than the average of tenth-class variety rubbish.

Wallack's Theatre, for instance, has redeemed the errors of "Youth" and "Victor Durand" by the production of a pleasant play, called "Impulse," cleverly adapted from an old French comedy by Mr. Stephenson, a London playwright.

The story of "Impulse" is not new; but it is treated so naturally and unconventionally that it equally interests the most blasé and the most salady of playgoers. There is a weak wife, who, during the absence of her husband at the wars, flirts with a handsome Frenchman, who persuades her to elope with him just as her husband returns. There is a friend of the family, a gallant Colonel, who dextrously interferes with the elopement, and detains the wife until the husband appears to take her back to his home, but not to his heart.

Of course, as in "Lady Clare," "The Lady of Lyons" and a dozen other well-known plays, the wife falls in love with her husband as soon as he holds himself aloof from her. But this ordinary complication is given a clever turn in "Impulse" through the intervention of the gallant Colonel aforesaid,

The Frenchman forces himself into the presence of the weak wife, who no longer cares for him, and, by threats, compels her to introduce him to her husband. As a friend of the husband the Frenchman frequents the house, watching for an opportunity to speak to the wife alone. The opportunity occurs when all the characters are invited to a ball at the British embassy. The wife stays at home with a headache; the Frenchman comes in through the window. The wife declares that she hates him and loves her husband; the gallant Colonel arrives in time to hear these declarations. Presto! The Frenchman is expelled in disgrace, and the husband and wife rush into each others' arms.

Elegantly placed upon the stage, with new scenery by Goatcher, ravishing costumes for the ladies and splendid uniforms for the gentlemen, "Impulse" is so admirably acted by Rose Coghlan, Annie Robe, Effie Germon, Lester Wallack, John Gilbert and Osmond Tearle, that it would deserve success if it were a much weaker play. Mr. Wallack, as the Colonel, might star in the piece if he liked. The part suits him as if he had been measured for it, and he acts it with a humor, tact, sangfroid and bonhomie of which he seems to possess the sole secret among modern American comedians.

The season at Wallack's is to end, early in May, with revivals of "Diplomacy" and "Home," and, possibly, the production of an English drama, called "Joan," for Miss Coghlan. But "Impulse" has been its chief and best feature.

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THE Union Square Theatre, after a series of failures, reduced its prices thirty three per cent, put in new chairs, and produced a story play, called "A Prisoner for Life," modelled upon "The Two Orphans." Since this new departure it has been crowded, and the other managers are perplexed as to whether the play or the reduction in prices attracts the public.

Steele Mackaye's new theatre, the Lyceum, from which wonders are anticipated, is announced to open, on Easter monday, with a new play by Mr. Mackaye, a new company, headed by Robert Mantell, and so many mechanical contrivances and ingenuities that the Madison Square, with its elevator stage, is to be completely eclipsed.

The handsome new Standard Theatre has not yet secured a success in its speciality of opera comique. It is to be hoped that Gilbert and Sullivan's new Japanese opera will be produced there, and that Mr. Duff may renew his "Pinafore" profits, STEPHEN FISKE,

BOSTON CORRESPONDENCE.

EXHIBITION OF THE PAINT AND CLAY CLUB—VOGUE OF THE ENGLISH PORTRAIT PAINTERS—DRAWINGS BY A HARVARD ART PUPIL.

BOSTON, March 8, 1885.

No wonderful work of genius signalized this season's exhibition of the Paint and Clay Club, yet it was an exhilarating display of local art. It occupied the gallery of the Boston Art Club, which possesses the finest clubhouse among art clubs in this country or the world (if, indeed, it be not the only one in the world, it was when it was built three years ago) but is rather short of artists. The Paint and Clay has heretofore held its exhibition in its own room, a loft in the top of a business-block, which it has the use of rent-free. But now that the fun and novelty of taking ladies and gentlemen in evening dress up to its garret, through narrow and grimy stairways, lighted by oil lamps, has worn off, it has been deemed judicious to secure an exhibition-room less Bohemian. Hung in the place of the regular show of the Art Club, the Paint and Clay product for the year was seen to be one of serious character and high quality and fully representative of the best set of Boston painters, which the Art Club Exhibition usually has not been. Head and shoulders above their fellows in the club stood Foxcroft Cole (to whom both by seniority and by solid achievement would willingly be awarded the primacy among Boston artists at the present time) as landscapist and Frederick P. Vinton as portraitist. Pressing upon them in their respective departments came Enneking and Vonnoh; and among the works of the main body of painters were next to none of those puerilities and commonplaces which have so often composed the staple of American art exhibitions. Mr. Cole's landscapes had the richness and dignity, combined with truth and feeling, which tell of the ripened taste and complete power of a strong man in his best period of development. His warmest admirers were surprised, and more than vindicated in their habit of coupling his name with that of Daubigny, and classing him with the great modern French school; noble and sincere as always, but sweeter and tenderer than before was his group of canvases—rightly assigned the place of honor on the walls. Mr. Vinton's portrait of Rev. Dr. Peabody is little short of an "event" in his brilliant career. To his French technique, fine and fearless, is added in this grand figure in its academic robes, a genial glow of sympathy and "bonhomie" that have been missed in others of his works. The artist has apparently come to the conclusion that what is best in a man is, after all, the truest of the truth about him, rather than some peculiar and perhaps characteristic foible, however cleverly detected and keenly and courageously suggested. Enneking displayed in this exhibition his ambitious and rather perilous purpose to paint the figure as well as landscape. His pluck and determination are greater than his powers in this direction as yet. The flesh is over-particularized, labored and painty, the drawing far from faultless, and the subjects and compositions without interest or significance. Evidently he would like to follow in the footsteps of his friend and mentor George Fuller. It is somewhat puzzling that while his landscape work is redolent of, yes, saturated with, sentiment tender and true, his figures lack entirely the aroma of poetry shed from Fuller's. But Enneking is nearly twenty years younger than the master whom he so revered, and is not less true an artist in his aspirations. A stalwart worker, and an original and independent thinker, he will arrive somewhere in due time. Vonnoh's brilliant heads, sparkling with vitality and truth of detail, are well known in New York, and here were two of the best of them, together with a life-size portrait of a girl of twelve, which has been much discussed on account of her displaying but one long stocking, the other leg being folded under her, it was presumed, after the fashion of school-girls, though only a close search revealed what had become of the missing member. Among the noticeable landscapes were several of the loveliest and tenderest—rich in their very simplicity of bare, open moorland and sky—by John B. Johnston, and some delicate effects of color and light by Ross Turner, whose strong point is water-color and who paints effects commonly reckoned proper to water-color and paper with oil on canvas. Thomas Allen, the millionaire landscape-painter, contributed a carefully studied and very effective country-road scene with horses and tip-cart, coming straight on, capitably handled throughout. Mr. Allen, by the way, has added a studio story to the top of his brown-stone residence on Com-

monwealth Avenue, which is becoming a sort of Museum of rich spoils from many lands.

Ever since Mr. Hubert Herkomer came and went through the eligible portrait-purchasing class in Boston and New York, we have naturally been liable to incursions from English portraitists. Herkomer's immense rewards—a fair fortune made in a single winter—were not due simply to the incident of his coming from England, nor to the fact that he prepared his way in advance by letters to the best people, and played his trumps after arriving most skilfully. He could also paint. But there seems to have got abroad an impression that this last named incidental is not an essential. We have had two or three charming and amiable visitors here from England who may have some reason to feel confirmed in this view that proper letters of introduction and agreeable accomplishments for dinners, æsthetic parties and high teas quite sufficiently equip a man for painting the portraits of all the grand world of Boston and its children. Mr. Edward Clifford seems to have passed into every household in the fashionable circles and left its first-born done in his peculiar pastel. More puerile, crude, and feeble "likenesses," it is impossible to conceive passing muster as portraiture in the rural districts done at the tail of a travelling van, for \$1.50 the head. Yet such is the virtue of the fame of painting people of quality in England, that Boston's nobility and gentry have really taken Mr. Clifford's hard and hopeless pencil as inspired. It is nothing short of a scandal among those who thought that Boston had passed beyond that period of culture where such things were possible. A quantity of essentially shapeless heads, and figures with neither the flesh of humanity nor the anatomy of any known animal whereon to put flesh, have been exhibited at one of the art stores amid the wonder and amaze of the ordinary frequenters of the place. The naïveté, whether real or assumed, with which these exercises of the crayon-class are exhibited, steals away the wrath and contempt that would fall on the dealer were he to present them as his own wares; the strange story is told of their vogue among the first circles, and artists, connoisseurs and critics go silent and dazed away, both sadder and wiser in their apprehension of Boston culture. Poor Mr. Archer does not seem to flourish like his compatriot, probably because he is a much better artist. Boston has seen too much of the first-class French and French-trained American art to be satisfied with second-rate and third or fourth-rate British art and artists—the Boston, that is to say, that is not in snobdom.

Very opportunely while this painful exhibition of English-bred portrait-painting, together with a huge landscape by Mr. Vicat Cole—literal and labored, piecemeal and cold, with neither tone nor unity of effect—is holding at one shop, at another is hung a collection of the drawings of a favorite pupil of the Harvard University instructor in painting, who, though a hard-working scholar and "high-toned" man, might be demonstrated to be a snob in art, according to Thackeray's definition of the snob as one who models himself upon his great man, surrendering his own individuality implicitly to a "set," and finding delight and wonder, even in its exemplars' defects and vices. Mr. Moore, of Harvard, preaches and practises the English art especially, and Mr. Warren, who makes the exhibition under notice, is his faithful pupil. Technically complete his work is pronounced by the admirers of the school. A rock is shown (in opaque water-colors) with every crack and discoloration, bush and weed; a mountain with every patch picked out in detail, and the whole thus belittled; some admirably accurate copyings of architecture, perfect in perspective and values, and some excellent reproductions of the rime of age on Venetian walls, with not a course of bricks more or less than there should be in fact where the plaster has dropped off—these are the triumphs of this purely pedagogical art. But where the pupil has attempted to paint some poetry into his landscape, where he sought to render some large or tender effect, or suggest something beyond what he can delineate, his schooling has failed him, of course. So his mist can be cut, apparently, like cheese, or kneaded-like putty, and his sunlight is as hard and metallic as so much sheet brass. He is technically equipped, say the worshippers of this sort of thing, and ready now to paint like Turner, if he has Turner's inspiration. If, indeed! For if he had had any inspiration, either he never would have put up with the discipline he has been through, or it would have been killed out by this time. Like the poor horse that was taught to eat shavings, his art just as it got completely trained was dead. GRETA,